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ABSTRACT

Five international conferences were held during the 1990s by the Peace Education Commission, a semi-independent subgroup of the International Peace Research Association. The conferences were held in Groningen (The Netherlands), Firenze (Italy), Kyoto (Japan), Budapest (Hungary), and Valletta (Malta). This document is a brief commentary on the topics covered by the 124 papers presented at these conferences. Nineteen specific papers are mentioned in the commentary. (EH)

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Comments on a Guide to Five Conference Reports

Åke Bjerstedt

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During the 1990s the Peace Education Commission, a semi-independent subgroup of the International Peace Research Association, has held five international conferences, in chronological order in Groningen, Firenze, Kyoto, Budapest and Valletta. From each of these meetings a conference report has been put together in which the contributions have been presented either in full-text form or in the form of a summary. These five conference reports have been published by the Malmö School of Education in Sweden. In addition, a small guide to these five reports has been organized in order to facilitate the process of locating various kinds of contributions. The guide contains a complete list of the contributions, an author index and a subject index. In the present text the guide is briefly described, and the author comments on the topics of peace education attended to in the contributions to the five conferences.

Keywords: Aims of education, bibliographical guide, conferences, documentation, global approach, peace education, peace research, teaching methods, values.

What Have Peace Education Commission Papers Dealt With in the 1990s? Comments on a Guide to Five Conference Reports

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A Guide to Five Conference Reports

During the 1990s the Peace Education Commission (PEC) has held five conferences, in chronological order in Groningen (The Netherlands), Firenze (Italy), Kyoto (Japan), Budapest (Hungary) and Valletta (Malta). From each of these meetings a conference report has been put together in which the contributions have been presented either in full-text form or in the form of a summary. These five conference reports have been published by the Malmö School of Education in Sweden with me responsible for the editorial work, and it is still possible to order all of them from Malmö. (See the first five titles in References, List A below.)

Since these conference proceedings contain contributions from many corners of the world during the 1990s, they seem to be a profitable source of information for researchers and educators interested in peace-related education. It therefore seemed to be useful to put together a small guide to these five reports in order to facilitate the process of locating various kinds of contributions. The guide has recently been published in the series "Peace Education Miniprints". (See the last title in References, List A.) My task here is to describe this guide and make some comments related to it.

The guide has three major parts: (a) First, a complete list of the

contributions as presented in the five conference reports. For each conference the contributions are listed alphabetically according to authors' names. (b) Second, an author index (with information about country). (c) And third, a subject index with a number of keywords or key expressions for various kinds of contents dealt with.

Some Comments on Topics Dealt With

I will make some brief comments here on the topics treated. As can easily be seen from the lists of contributions as well as from the subject index a very broad range of problems have been tackled, and many different kinds of interests covered in these PEC presentations over recent years. Self-evidently the contributions could be sorted into categories of many different kinds. I choose here to present a very simple grouping of the contributions into eight different types of texts, giving some concrete examples of titles.

(1) An important and large group is made up of *discussions of principles*. Several of these deal with the drastic change it may involve to proceed from traditional educational procedures to an education for peace. Terms used in these contexts are "conversion", "transformation" or "paradigm shift". Examples are contributions no. 22 (numbers refer to the list in the first part of the guide) by Riitta Wahlstrom ("Peace education meets the challenge of the cultures of militarism"), no. 70 by Antonino Drago ("Peace education in the middle of a paradigm shift"), and no. 122 by Michael Wessells ("The role of peace education in a culture of peace: A social-psychological analysis"). The examples of papers mentioned in this presentation are also given in References. List B below, with some additional information.

(2) Since peace education is a new field of interest and activities with many possibilities of variation, one interesting and useful area of contributions is *descriptions of the present situation in different countries*

with respect to peace-related education. The subject index shows a fairly large number of such reports, for example from Australia, Japan, South Africa and Sweden. A variation of this type of contribution are those texts, fewer in number, that deal with *comparisons between different countries*. This may be surveys of a larger number of countries based on questionnaire data such as contribution no. 35 by Åke Bjerstedt ("Peace education around the world at the beginning of the 1990s") or more detailed comparisons between two countries such as contribution no. 50 by Toshifumi Murakami ("Peace education in Britain and Japan: A comparison").

(3) A related but more uncommon area is *historical perspectives* on the development within a country, a region or a special educational institution. Examples are contributions no. 107 (Max Lawson: "The International People's College, Helsingør, Denmark: Seven decades of peace education") and no. 120 (Bengt Thelin: "Early tendencies of peace education in Sweden").

(4) Reports on *specific levels of the formal educational system* is a more frequently used category of contributions. For example, we not only find contributions from the various levels of the compulsory school but also texts on the pre-school (as in no. 21), teacher education (as in no. 78) and general university education (as in nos. 38 and 58). It is obvious that PEC has not specialized in any particular level of the educational system.

(5) A supplementary category deals with *reports on peace education activities outside the formal educational system*. These may, for example, deal with the media. In this group there are several texts discussing peace museums (such as no. 71).

(6) A sixth category contains contributions dealing with *special ways of shaping ("designing") peace education*. In this group I would place texts on the use of postage stamps (no. 83) or on work with computers (no. 96), for example.

(7) A few contributions deal with special *teaching materials* for peace education. This could be a text on principles for developing

teaching materials for schools (such as contribution no. 15 from Ireland/ Northern Ireland) or this may be a critical analysis of some existing materials (such as contribution no. 57).

(8) A final eighth category in this small overview contains presentations on *cognitive perspectives*, for example, studies of the existence and character of enemy images (contribution no. 2) or studies of conceptions of peace and war among children and young people (contributions 98, 103 and 118).

When considering the relative frequency of conference contributions to these eight categories, it can be said that one category is quite large (the one called here "discussions of principles") and two categories markedly small ("historical perspectives" and contributions dealing with special teaching materials). The remaining categories have a position in between in this respect and are fairly similar to each other in frequency.

Separately from this categorization of contents I have tried to estimate the number of presentations that report empirical research (by which I mean here some form of systematic data collection using, for example, questionnaires, interviews, tests or observations). I found that about 20 per cent of the contributions dealt with empirical research data of this kind.

Final Observations

I would like to make some final comments on this pattern of conference contributions within PEC during the 1990s.

(1) First, considering that PEC is part of a research association, IPRA (International Peace Research Association), one might perhaps feel that the number of contributions reporting on empirical research is fairly small, approximately one contribution out of five. Several possible reasons may be considered. (a) One might be that within IPRA some peace researchers have had an idea about a kind of division of tasks of this type: peace researchers establish knowledge, while peace educators

transmit knowledge. Nowadays, however, I do not think that this is a division of tasks that is accepted within PEC, and hence I do not think that this is an essential factor. Two other reasons are probably more important. (b) One reason is that peace education as a phenomenon in educational practice is still rather underdeveloped in the educational institutions of the world. That which almost does not exist is not so easily made an object of empirical research. (c) An additional reason is that it can be considered to be a difficult research area, which, among other things, is related to the complex educational goals.

Personally I think that education could play a decisive role on the way towards a global peace culture, and that there is a *strong need for research and development work over a broad spectrum of problems*. So far just quite limited contributions have been made by relevant research disciplines.

(2) Second, within the framework of these broad needs there are, however, areas that could be noted as especially important for continued work. Different people may here come up with diverse judgements, depending on their particular personal experiences. Personally, I would like to point out *three important areas* for continued work: (a) Research and development oriented towards *the pre-school level* (since it is important to establish an early foundation of values and attitudes and since only limited research and development work has been carried out here so far). (b) Work directed towards *teacher education* within this area (since teacher education activities related to peace education in many countries have been non-existent so far or very insufficient and the lack of experience is considerable). (c) Work oriented towards *development and evaluation of teaching materials* for various educational levels (since teachers very often experience lack of support from materials within the range of traditional textbooks and teaching aids and since relatively limited work has been carried out within this problem area so far).

(3) Finally, it is important to add that it is not only strict empirical research that is of interest. In a field of such a multi-dimensional character as the area of peace education it is essential to work with and

integrate other types of experiences and to *stimulate a broad collection of experiences* (within the frameworks of developmental work, action research etc.). In this perspective, the contributions to the PEC conferences are important documents as starting-points for continued work *also* when they do not contain empirical research studies in the traditional sense.

Note: The text above is a slightly revised version of a presentation for "Creating Nonviolent Futures", 16th General Conference of the International Peace Research Association, held at the University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia, July 8-12, 1996.

References

List A: Five conference reports from the Peace Education Commission (PEC) during the 90s and a related guide

Bjerstedt, Å. (Ed.) Education for peace in the nineties: A conference report. (PEC/IPRA, Groningen, July 1990.) *Peace Education Reports*, No. 1, 1990.

Bjerstedt, Å. (Ed.) Peace education: Glimpses from the EUPRA Conference in Firenze. *Peace Education Reports*, No. 5, 1992.

Bjerstedt, Å. (Ed.) Education for peace: A conference report from Kyoto. *Peace Education Reports*, No. 6, 1992.

Bjerstedt, Å. (Ed.) Education for peace: A conference report from Budapest. *Peace Education Reports*, No. 10, 1994.

Bjerstedt, Å. (Ed.) Education for peace: A conference report from Malta. *Peace Education Reports*, No. 13, 1994.

Bjerstedt, Å. Peace education in the 1990s: A guide to five conference reports from PEC. *Peace Education Miniprints*, No. 84, 1996.

(The conference reports and the guide are available from: School of Education /attn.: T. Hallström/, Box 23501, S-20045 Malmö, Sweden.)

List B: Some examples of PEC conference contributions (mentioned in the text above)

Note: The contributions are given here with their numbers in the guide, and for each contribution is indicated in which report the text can be found (PER = Peace Education Reports) and on which page it starts.

002. Bjerstedt, Åke. Enemy images explored via associative techniques. PER 1, p. 84.

015. Rogers, Paul & Ward, Maura. Developing school materials for peace education in Ireland. PER 1, p. 92.

021. Wahlström, Riitta. Peace education for preschoolers. PER 1, p. 97.

022. Wahlstrom, Riitta. Peace education meets the challenge of the cultures of militarism. PER 1, p. 24.

035. Bjerstedt, Åke. Peace education around the world at the beginning of the 1990s: Some data from questionnaires to Ministries of Education and members of the Peace Education Commission. PER 6, p. 100.

038. Chitoran, Dumitru & Symonides, Janusz. UNESCO approaches to international education in universities. PER 6, p. 144.

050. Murakami, Toshifumi. Peace education in Britain and Japan: A comparison. PER 6, p. 122.

057. Toh Swee-Hin & Floresca-Cawagas, Virginia. The World Bank as development educator: Towards which paradigm? PER 6, p. 177.

058. Toh Swee-Hin, Floresca-Cawagas, Virginia & Durante, Ofelia. Building a peace education program: Critical reflections on the Notre Dame university experience in the Philippines. PER 6, p. 234.

070. Drago, Antonino: Peace education in the middle of a paradigm shift. PER 10, p. 146.

071. Duffy, Terence. The role of peace museums in peace education: A new terrain for peace educators. PER 10, p. 61.

078. Rathenow, Hanns-Fred. Project work in teacher training as part of peace education. PER 10, p. 109.

083. Abrams, Irwin. Postage stamps and peace education: The Nobel Peace Prize. PER 13, p. 171.

096. Groff, Linda & Smoker, Paul. The uses of computers – including Internet, Simulations and Multimedia – in peace education. PER 13, p. 186.

098. Hakvoort, Ilse. Children's conceptions of peace and war: A longitudinal study. PER 13, p. 189.

103. Hägglund, Solveig. Developing concepts of peace and war: Aspects of gender and culture. PER 13, p. 192.

118. Sokolova, Emilia S. Children's thoughts about peace and war. PER 13, p. 121.

120. Thelin, Bengt. Early tendencies of peace education in Sweden. PER 13, p. 210.

122. Wessels, Michael G. The role of peace education in a culture of peace: A social-psychological analysis. PER 13, p. 15.

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